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ABSTRACT

By placing its findings within the context of total secondary public education, a followup study of high school graduates indicated the relative effectiveness of vocational, academic, and general secondary school preparation. Data were obtained from 71% of a representative sample (N=466) of 1979 Indiana high school graduates. General program graduates had both the lowest average grade point average and lowest combined scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the Preliminary SAT; academic graduates had the highest. Academic program graduates were least likely to be married, general program graduates the most likely. General program graduates had the highest rate of unemployment, whereas vocational graduates had the lowest. Both the academic and vocational program graduates seemed satisfied with their high school education. All graduates indicated their greatest difficulties as an adult were in the areas of personal life skills and economic and career difficulties. Graduates of all three programs indicated that they would want their children to have more effective relationships with their high school teachers along with more preparation for the real world. Findings showed that the academic and vocational education systems should be refined rather than restructured or abandoned and that general education students needed to be provided with more direction for their lives. (Data tables, methodology, and the follow-up instrument are appended.) (YLB)

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THE CLASS OF 1979 SPEAKS OUT:

A CONSUMERS' REPORT ON HOOSIER HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

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January, 1987

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PREFACE

Once again there is a furor intended to improve public education in Indiana as well as in the nation. This probably represents a desirable intent. Any individual or institution, including public edcuation, should continually strive for improvement. The activities intended to improve public education should be of great concern to educators and non-educators alike. However, the changes currently being proposed and implemented for public education are being made largely on the basis of insufficient facts and understanding. These changes are rooted largely in supposition and unsubstantiated "common wisdom".

There have been many positive occurrences within public education during recent decades. Indeed, some of these positive occurrences may provide the "causes" for some of the circumstances of greatest concern to today's educators and general public. For example, nationwide, the percentage of persons age 25 or older who did not finish high school dropped from 75 percent in 1940 to 39 percent in 1981 (1). The Indiana Department of Education reports that, based on ninth grade enrollments four years earlier, better than 80 percent of the class of 1983 graduated from high school (2). These statistics probably indicate progress for education in the nation and in Indiana. However, they also indicate that public education now is attempting to serve greater numbers and, it must be assumed, a more diverse population than ever before.

Nationally, the percent of high school graduates enrolling in college rose from 23.7 in 1960 to 32.5 in 1981. Higher education enrollments were 3.8 million in 1960 and 12.1 million in 1980 (1). The Indiana Department of Education reports that 49 percent of the 1983 high school graduates enrolled in post-secondary institutions with 38 percent enrolled in institutions or programs leading to the baccalaureate degree (2). Good? Perhaps. We really don't know. Twenty-five percent of the current jobs require a college degree (3). Of the ten occupations projected to increase at the greatest rate during the next

decade, only two, teachers and registered nurses, require baccalaureate training (4). Nevertheless, the current trend appears to focus on our secondary schools not as comprehensive institutions which provide a variety of high quality learning options for students, but as something akin to the academic prep or grammar schools of yesteryear.

We believe the purpose of American public education is to provide the "least restrictive" and most appropriate education for all of its youth! The unstated assumption that appears to permeate much current educational thought is that a "college" education is desirable and anything else is a lesser "consolation prize".

Inquiry is needed in two basic areas to provide information for more effectively planning and implementing change in public education including secondary and postsecondary vocational education. We must know more about the early school leavers or dropouts. At present there is a woeful lack of information concerning such people, what really happens to them, and their actual reasons for leaving school. The second area in which systematic inquiry is required focuses on those people who do graduate from high school. It is this second group that can aid in answering questions concerning whether enrolling a given percent of graduates in various forms of secondary and postsecondary education is desirable or realistic. It is this group that can provide insights into the adequacy of various public secondary education programs. It is this group that can provide answers regarding the costs in financial and human terms of enrolling or not enrolling in, of succeeding or of failing in secondary and postsecondary programs of various types. It is this second group upon which this study focuses.

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Purpose of This Study:

To effectively plan modifications for public education, particularly secondary programs and services, educators must understand what happens to students after they leave high school. Some follow-up studies of high school graduates have been attempted for various reasons. In fact, follow-up studies of secondary vocational students are legislatively required. Thus vocational education appears to do a better job of graduate follow-up than any other segment of education. However, based on a review of ERIC documents, most follow-up studies are limited to vocational graduates and frequently are based on relatively low return rates. Such limitations restrict the extent to which generalizations can be made concerning the relative effectiveness of various public school curricula. This study will seek to place its findings within the context of total secondary public education to suggest some indications of the relative effectiveness of vocational, academic, and general secondary school preparation.

The purpose of this study is to provide descriptive information for planning purposes. That information has been obtained from a representative sample of Indiana high school graduates more than seven years after graduation. To collect the quality of descriptive data desired, it was judged necessary that the participating graduates be out of school long enough to have made "false starts" and "restarts" as well as having had sufficient time to participate in additional training or education and to make a commitment to a career path.

Project Plan:

Data were obtained systematically from a representative random sample of 1979 Indiana high school graduates in order to provide a defensible base for

either continuing, intensifying, or modifying current priorities and directions of change for secondary education and, perhaps, postsecondary education as well.

Therefore, a stratified random sample of 1979 high school graduates was used for this study. Four school corporations agreed to participate in and contribute to the study. The four high schools from which the sample was drawn serve primarily a rural, an urban, a suburban, and a small city clientele. Furthermore, one school is located in the northern section of the State, two in the central section and one in the southern third of the state. (From this perspective, the demographics of the sample with 61.8% of the sample selected from urban areas and 38.2% selected from non-urban areas closely approximates the demographics of Indiana's population which has a 64.2% urban population and 35.8% rural population.)* A 25% random sample was drawn from each of the four high school's class of 1979. It is upon this sample that the following report is based. The total sample was composed of 466 graduates and as intended, each subsample was made up of 30-200 graduates.

* According to their chambers of commerce, one rural city had a population of 20,056 in 1980 and the other had a population of 38,597 in 1983. The State Data Center defines an urban area as one which has at least 50,000 people in a continuously incorporated area or one which has a population of 50,000 and an average population density of 1,000 persons per square mile. Rural areas are defined as everywhere else with 3.4% of Indiana's population living in areas with 1,000-2,500 persons and 2.5% of its population living in towns of less than 1,000 persons. Thus, two of the school communities are considered rural and the other two are considered urban. Information from The State Data Center, Bureau of the Census, "Characteristics of the Population" Indiana Department of Commerce - PC 80-1-A16.

It was judged essential that as close to 100 percent as possible of the sample of graduates be included in the study because it was hypothesized that the individuals who can provide the most unique insights regarding the impact of secondary school experiences on young adults also are apt to be the most difficult of the graduates to contact. An impressive *seventy-one percent of the 1979 graduates contacted* provided information for this study.

The wealth of information generously shared by these graduates provides those in the educational community with sufficient information and a solid base upon which to validate or question the assumptions powering current efforts at educational reformation and to create appropriate well-grounded educational programs.

Let's imagine then, as we take a closer look, that all these follow-up study participants attended one high school and in 1979 completed their secondary education as the graduating class of Indiola High School located in Anywhere, Indiana. The following sections look at these graduates of Indiola High School, their past experiences, their present circumstances and their intentions for their future.

The 1979 Class of Indiola High School:

In 1979, 466 people graduated from IHS. At the time of graduation 26.8% of the people were classified as vocational program graduates, 28.8% were classified as academic program graduates and 44.4% were classified as general graduates.

At Indiola High School, students were classified into these three program areas based on the following criteria:

I. VOCATIONAL GRADUATES - (1) involved in an occupational program, (2) utilizing a laboratory or cooperative method, (3) engaged in learning periods of two or three hour blocks, (4) must be a program completer, (5) if the graduate attended a program at the area vocational school, the area school verified completion status.

II. ACADEMIC GRADUATES (college preparatory) - prepared for college as evidenced by completion of (1) math (algebra and one advanced course), (2) science (biology and advanced science), and (3) English (four years).

III. SPECIAL EDUCATION GRADUATES - (1) official designation by local school corporations as a special education student, and (2) not in vocational, academic, or general categories. (Graduates of this program area and their needs have not been included in this follow-up study because of low incidence of identification in 1979).

IV. GENERAL GRADUATES - all not fitting into one of the other three categories.

In 1986, 466 1979 graduates from IHS were contacted and asked to participate in the study. Three hundred thirty-two graduates or 71% of the class provided information for this follow-up study. Of these people, 28.9% were graduates of a vocational program, 32.8% were graduates of the academic program and 38.3% were classified as general program graduates (see Table A). Of the 71% included in the summary statistics, 11 persons stated they did not want to participate in the study and 2 people (.67%) were deceased.

The Indiola High Graduates - 1979:

The average 1979 graduate of Indiola High School had a grade point average (GPA) of approximately 2.66 on a 4 point scale at the time of graduation. The graduates of the academic program had a GPA of 3.09 while the average GPA for vocational graduates was 2.63, and was 2.31 for general program graduates.

The average graduate had a bit more than 50/50 chance of taking College Board exams. Almost all (95%) of the academic graduates took College Boards. However, less than half (45%) of the vocational graduates and less than

one-third (30%) of the general graduates did so. This is not a surprising circumstance since the primary purpose of the academic curriculum is college preparation and the College Boards are college entrance examinations. The academic graduates scored an average composite verbal and math score of 869 as seen on Table B. The average vocational graduate scored between the academic and general program graduate on these examinations with composite average scores of 745 for vocational students and 708 for general program students. For IHS 1979 graduates, almost 60% of all the graduates regularly worked during the school year (Table C). Vocational graduates were the most likely to work (69%) followed by those classified as general program graduates (62.7%).

The Indiola High School 1979 Graduate in 1986:

Marital Status:

In 1986, the 1979 graduates are about 25 years old and well into early adulthood. They have had approximately seven years since graduation from high school to pursue postsecondary education if they so wished, to begin their careers, to establish long term relationships, and to begin families. In other words, they theoretically have begun to take their place as "productive members of society".

Seven years after graduation, less than one half (48%) of the follow-up participants report being married. More than five percent (5.4%) more men than women have remained single. Of the three program areas, the highest rate of singles are the "academics", while over half (52.5%) of the general students are married. The academic graduates also have the fewest children of the three groups. Only about 32% of them now have children compared with almost three-fourths (73%) of the general graduates and over one-half (54%) of the vocational graduates (Table E).

Employment:

Currently, over one half of the graduates of 1979 are employed in service related industries and work in places such as hospitals, correctional centers, rehabilitation centers, schools, banks, and insurance companies (Table F). Vocational graduates have the second highest rate of employment in service jobs at a rate of 57.3%. Specific jobs they are doing in these organizations include such diverse areas as engineering technology, secretarial work, medical technology, law enforcement, power company technology, and appliance repair. *General graduates report the lowest percentage of service related jobs (39%) and the highest rate of manufacturing jobs at 22.9%.* Some of the jobs filled by general graduates and included in the manufacturing category are production jobs in various industries such as machinery, steel, food processing, and pharmaceuticals manufacturing.

Academic graduates have the highest percentage rate of employment in service industries with 61% of their employment reported in this category.

Vocational program graduates reported the lowest percentage of unemployment (5%) of the three program areas; academic program graduates reported a 7.6% unemployment rate and general program graduates reported an 11% unemployment rate--the highest of the three program areas at a time when Indiana's overall unemployment rate was 7.9%.

Income:

Twenty-four percent of all graduates reported a 1985 income range of $10,000-14,999. Another 24% identified themselves as earning between $15,000 and $19,999. Looking at the percentage of individuals across program areas reporting 1985 earnings between the range of $15,000 and $34,999, we can see

that 46% of the vocational graduates, 43% of the general graduates and 47% of the academic program graduates fall into this range. When looking at the income range of $20,000 to over $35,000 per year, however, twenty-six percent of the academic graduates and 24% of the vocational graduates fall into this range while the percentage of general students in this range drops to 18%. Again, when looking at the range of $20,000 to $34,999 the same trend appears to be true with 22% of vocational graduates, 25% of academic graduates and only 16% of general graduates falling into this income range.

High School in Terms of Preparation:

Appropriately, the greatest percentage of vocational graduates (82%) indicated that their education had indeed prepared them for a job while the largest percentage of academic graduates (71%) indicated that their high school education had prepared them for college. Interestingly, *the largest percentage of general program graduates indicated that their high school education had prepared them for neither job nor college but that it had prepared them for adulthood* (see Table I).

When asked if high-school instruction related their course work to practical situations, 38.1% of academic, 34.4% of the vocational graduates, and 32.2% of the general graduates stated that it had not done so (see Table J). If responding "no" to this question, study participants were asked to indicate whether they would have wanted their course work to relate to practical situations. Ninety-four percent of the vocational graduates, 87% of general graduates, and 85% of academic graduates who said "no" indicated that they would have wanted it to do so.

What They Have Done So Far:

Greatest Accomplishments:

In order to get an idea of their achievements and goals since 1979, the graduates were asked to describe their greatest accomplishment since graduating from Indiola High School (Table K). Sixty-one percent of the vocational program graduates and 37% of the general program graduates most frequently identified career-related accomplishments. Academic program graduates (54%) most often described education-related accomplishments.

Typical statements made by vocational graduates to describe their career-related accomplishments include:

- My greatest accomplishment is being able to keep my jobs for periods of time and for my bosses and supervisors to really depend on me and to trust me as a person and worker;
- I feel my career has been my greatest accomplishment. I have advanced from a keypunch operator (I took this course in high school) to a programmer analyst;
- Holding a difficult job for 5 1/2 years and not giving up when things got rough;
- Because of my high school education, I have been able to complete college courses with above average grades and also make reasonably good money as a secretary.

A general graduate reports; "My job is my greatest accomplishment. I now work in a pharmacy. I've come along way. It took a lot of time to learn my job. I took classes while working." Finally, as one vocational graduate puts it, "I feel I have yet to attain my greatest accomplishment; but the most satisfying accomplishment thus far has to be simply finding a job." The second most frequently cited accomplishment of both vocational and general program graduates involve family as cited by 22% of vocational graduates and 26% of general program graduates.

While vocational and general program graduates share the same first and second most frequently reported accomplishment, they differ on their third. Economic accomplishments were the third most frequently reported by vocational program graduates (21%). Representative statements descriptive of this category of response are:

- Getting out on my own for the first time and making it;
- Financial advancement;
- Owning my own home;
- My farm - I bought a farm house on 5 1/2 acres a couple of years ago.

Educational accomplishments came up third on the list of accomplishments most frequently identified by general program graduates. Statements typical of this perception include:

- Accomplishing a 3.6 GPA in a Bachelor's program in chemistry from Purdue for Pre-Med;
- Overcoming my devaluated view that I was not intelligent enough to continue my education after high school, making up for the time and education I wasted in high school, succeeding in college and hopefully going on to graduate school; and
- Just finishing Ivy-Tech where I received a technical degree in Industrial maintenance.

Graduates of the academic program most frequently cited education as their greatest accomplishment (54%) followed by career accomplishments (34%) and personal life skills (22%).

Thirty-four percent of the academic program graduates cited career-related accomplishments--their second most frequently stated accomplishment. Examples of these career accomplishments are:

- Performance on the job since graduating from college (tallied as both career and education accomplishment);
- Getting hired as a teacher and a successful one as well; and
- Becoming Director of an Emergency Youth Shelter where I presently work has been my greatest accomplishment. It's a big responsibility and the fact that (so far) I've been pretty successful at it, is something I'm most proud of.

The third most frequently cited area of accomplishment on the part of academic program graduates (32%) was personal life skills. Personal life skills are those behaviors, attitudes, and skills for survival, adaptation, and obtaining satisfaction in today's world and include time and self management, self esteem, and communication skills. Statements representative of this category are:

- transcending my own limitations;
- regaining my curiosity and love of learning in conjunction with establishing a positive self-image;
- Growing up, putting my priorities in order;
- Losing 40 lbs. of body weight;
- Getting organized into making myself responsible; and
- Becoming a more well-rounded person.

Greatest Difficulties:

Problems and obstacles the graduates have been handling in their lives since 1979, were identified by asking what they consider their greatest difficulty as an adult (Table L).

Personal life skills were mentioned by the highest percentage of both academic (46%) and general (25%) graduates as the greatest difficulty faced by them as adults. Economic difficulties were mentioned most frequently by the vocational program graduates. Representative samples of personal life skill difficulties mentioned by the academic graduates include:

- Overcoming failures and gaining confidence to press on;
- Trying to accomplish goals that others have set for me and not knowing what goals I have set for myself;
- To clearly understand what my priorities are and to dedicate myself to them;
- Realizing you have to prepare for the future not just for today;

- Communication - relating and expressing myself to others, mainly in my job;
- Finding time to do everything I want and need to do; and
- My greatest difficulty has been maintenance of an appropriate stress level given my extreme desire to perform above standard performance levels.

General students also identified personal life skills as their greatest difficulty. Specific statements describing this difficulty include references to self-management, values and priorities among other areas and include:

- Saying 'no' to drugs and alcohol;
- Stress related to the type of work I have chosen; and
- Overcoming the limitations I put on myself during my high schools days - learning that I was responsible for these limitations and that my peers, principals and teachers were not!

Economic difficulties were mentioned by the highest percentage of vocational students (29%) and as the second most frequently described difficulty for academic (25%) and general students (24%). The following statements provide a picture of those economic difficulties.

Vocational graduates:

- Establishing credit to set up my own business;
- Bills;
- Financial management;
- Managing credit cards.

General graduates:

- Money;
- Dealing with financial realism; it's very expensive just to live;
- Dealing with Reagonomics and finances. I would like to travel but finances won't allow for it.

Academic graduates:

- Learning to budget my money;
- Not being able to handle my financial situation as well as I would like to;
- A general ignorance of business and financial affairs.

Career difficulties were mentioned frequently enough to categorize them as the third most frequently mentioned difficulty for graduates of all three program areas (vocational - 20%; academic - 24% and general - 20%). It should be noted, however, that vocational graduates also mentioned family difficulties and no difficulties with the same frequency as career difficulties.

Various statements and examples provide an overall picture of the career difficulties faced by the 1979 graduates. Statements from academic graduates include:

- Trying to find a decent job - a job I went to school for;
- To find exactly what I want to do in a job and liking it;
- My greatest difficulty as an adult was becoming a part of the work force. It took me a long time out of college to find a good job.

General graduates report career difficulties as:

- Taking factory work instead of a career in electronics;
- Finding a job where I can support myself;
- Finding a job I like to do;
- I did not prepare myself for any kind of career in high school. It was very difficult for me to accept that I didn't have the proper training for the job I was employed at. It took me a lot longer to get where I am than it should have.

Comments from vocational graduates about career difficulties include:

- Overcoming the shyness that I have in order to be more aggressive in the job market. Trying for new opportunities and not being shy, I believe will better a career;
- Finding a position that would compensate me for my skills is my biggest frustration;
- Learning and dealing with a working world. It's a different environment than high school. You're on your own.

Continuation of Their Education:

Follow-up-study participants provided information about their work/education history since 1979 in chronological order. From this information and from information provided through other questions on the questionnaire, the current status of the graduates' educational pursuits was established. (Table H provides an overview of this information.) As one might expect, academic program graduates show the highest percentage of those who have all ready completed their intended degree or certificate (53%) as well as those who are currently pursuing their intended degree or certificate (16%). Graduates of all three program areas report approximately the same percentage of individuals who have an incomplete degree or certificate and intend to complete (10-12%), as well as those who have an incomplete degree and do not intend to complete (5-7%).

Along all other dimensions, graduates of both vocational and general programs seem to be describing similar patterns and experiences with formal academic postsecondary education to date. This includes approximately the same percentages of vocational program graduates (38%) and general program graduates (34%) who have not pursued a degree or certificate. Further, when asked how they intend to receive further training by 1995 (See Table M), 8% of both general and vocational program graduates indicate that at this time they have no intentions of pursuing training or education.

Distinctions, however, between general and vocational program graduates seem to emerge when we take a further look at how these same graduates say they intend to receive further training by 1995 (See Table M). Almost one-third of both vocational and general program graduates report that they have not pursued a further degree or certificate. When asked what additional education or training experiences they plan to have had by 1995, 26% of the general program

students or twice as many compared to 13% of the vocational program students report that they are either "not sure" if they will pursue further training or provide "no response" to this question.

Additional areas where general and vocational program graduates differ on how they intend to receive training include those categories of on-the-job training, attending seminars/workshops and taking additional classes. A higher percentage of vocational program graduates than general program graduates indicated their intentions to utilize these three methods for obtaining further education/training.

What They Would Do Differently:

Now that 1979 graduates have had the opportunity to assess their current and future needs on the various levels of career, education, and personal development, it is realistic to assume that they would have valuable opinions about their high school curriculum.

Capitalizing on their position, then, as "Monday morning quarterbacks" with a high investment in the future, the graduates were asked to identify which subjects they would enroll in more, fewer or the same number of courses in if they had it to do over again.

As can be seen in Table N, the responses of graduates across all three program areas were extremely similar. Graduates consistently chose math*, and

* It has been speculated that this observation of the need for or "request" for more math courses is indeed legitimate especially for 1979 graduates enrolled in vocational and general studies. In 1979, vocational and general students were not required to take more than one basic math course and indeed many in these programs graduated with only this basic math. Further, academic students were not required to take math courses beyond algebra and geometry and indeed many did just minimally fulfill this requirement - to their obvious regret at this time. Of course this math requirement is now changed in the curriculum.

practical arts (such as home economics, business, industrial arts) as the two subject areas in which they would all enroll in more courses if given the opportunity. Further, graduates of the academic program indicated they would enroll in more science courses while graduates of vocational and general programs indicated a desire to enroll in more job-preparation classes.

An even stronger consistency can be observed in those areas which the graduates indicated they would enroll in fewer courses if they had it to do over again. All three "fewer" lists include fine arts, social studies and foreign language.

Along with curriculum changes, two other areas that the follow-up study participants stated they would change if they could do it over again, are the areas of participation in school related activities and working during the school year. As was described earlier, a very large percentage of vocational and general program graduates reported that they had worked during the regular school year (Table C). These students were also asked if they would work if given the opportunity to do it over again. In response to this question, all three participant groups to varying degrees stated they would do it differently, e.g. 8% fewer vocational students and 2.5% fewer general students said they would work regularly while 7.5% more of the academic students stated they would work regularly if they had it to do over again.

All follow-up study participants were also asked whether they would participate in school related activities if they had not done so (Table D). In all three areas between 61-66% of those graduates who had not participated expressed a wish that they had done so.

Current Community Involvement:

The current *frequency of participation by 1979 graduates in community related activities does seem to correlate with their previous frequency of participation in high school related events* (Table O). Though not with the same

intensity, the academic graduates continue to participate more than the general and vocational program graduates. Further, the general and vocational program graduates are quite similar in their current levels of participation with general program graduates participating a bit more than vocational graduates as they had done in high school.

One would naturally expect, however, that the overall percentages of those participating would be at lower levels. Early adulthood seems to be the time when other activities such as beginning families, caring for young children, completing formal education and beginning careers take higher priority over community participation.

How They Want It To Be:

Since over 50% of these graduates now have children, it is also realistic to assume that they are assessing the value of their own education in terms of what they want for the education, development, and well-being of their children.

Graduates of Indiola High School were asked also to indicate one way they would want high school to be different for their children than it was for them. While graduates responded descriptively to this open ended question, their responses were categorized into a number of areas as can be seen on Table P. *Vocational (20.8%) and general (12.7%) program graduates most frequently indicated a desire for more effective student/teacher relationships.* Examples of this desire for more effective student/teacher relationships cited by vocational graduates include:

- Teachers should not hold something against kids because of what an older sibling did. That happened to me all the time;
- More time from teachers for the student as far as learning and knowing the student knows and understands;
- Teachers should deal with students on an individual basis and make learning a fun and rewarding experience; and

- More discipline from the teachers is what I would want, but in a way that my children could maybe believe teachers are trying to help. I had lots of respect for a few teachers but most didn't really understand that slow students will put up a front and miss school or classes or turn to drugs because they get put down for their slowness. But they can't help it. I felt rushed in most of my subjects all my life. Learning is essential to adulthood and I feel I was neglected.

In the same vein, general graduates expressed the following comments:

- I would want teachers to take more time and be on a one-on-one basis with children;

- Teachers should be more in tune with individual's needs instead of writing people off; and

- Students should be treated more as individuals. Teachers need to pay more attention to what is needed to help that student learn--more attention needs to be paid to personal learning needs."

The academic program graduates (17.1%) most frequently described changes in curriculum as the one way they want high school to be different for their children. One academic graduate stated, "I would want more chances for students to learn a vocational skill if that is what they want, e.g. electrical work, machinist, carpentry, and skilled labor work." Other examples describing desired changes in curriculum are: "More bookwork and less emphasis on sports and extracurricular activities.", and "There should be more mandatory classes, i.e. foreign language and computers. I would like to see all classes mandatory instead of letting the kids choose. They don't always do the best job."

The other two areas most frequently mentioned by vocational program graduates include more preparation for the real world (10.4%) and more career education and preparation (9.4%).

A few comments made by vocational program students concerning preparation for the real world include:

- I would want high school to involve more practical application. A high school diploma needs to have more clout with employers. It seems that many jobs require a college degree for skills which could be learned at the high school level;

- I would like for my children to be involved in practical life situations that may face them in the future . . . such as lay-offs, salaries under poverty level, how to raise a family, and making personal financial investments; and

- How to deal with real situations. I learned how to weld but not how to go out and earn a living at welding. Get more real world atmosphere in classroom. I was well-educated in welding, but not in real job shop atmosphere.

Another need frequently cited by vocational students is for more career education and preparation. Representative statements describing this area are:

- Students need to get a chance to see and experience what different jobs and professions are like. That way my children will have a better idea about a career choice;
- Have classes that would allow kids to explore career options;
- Give more detail on the variety of jobs there are, what subjects to take for them, detail on how the job is done and what it includes; and
- I would like to see improvements in the vocational education departments - more intensive training before entering the job market - more permanent placement opportunities.

In response to this question general program graduates described three areas with equal frequency. Two of the three areas described most frequently by general graduates, *"more preparation for the real world"* (12.7%), and *"more effective student/teacher relationships" (12.7%), were also two of the three areas most frequently described by the vocational and academic program graduates.* The third most frequently described way that general graduates (12.7%) want school to be different for their children is "more emphasis on the importance of education" and is illustrated by the following statements:

- I want my children to enjoy school and realize the value of education;
- Stressing the importance of education should be greatly increased;
- I want them to value the education offered and realize the need for that education later. I want them to take full advantage of the chance to experiment with different academic choices; and
- To have teachers and faculty really stress how important it is to take high school seriously and how it will help you to get somewhere in life.

As was said, *two of the three areas most frequently described by academic graduates include more effective student/teacher relationships (9.5%) and the need for more preparation for the real world (9.5%).* The area most frequently

described by academic graduates, however, refers to the need for better college preparation. The following are representative statements of this:

- Better college preparation could be provided in the form of college placement, clearer understanding of what courses one needs to take to prepare oneself for college work, better preparation for SAT tests;
- Offer courses that will assist students in preparing for and selecting an institution of higher education; and
- Prepare students for long range educational possibilities, keeping in touch with the pace of everyday living.

More effective student/teacher relationships was the second most described area and academic graduates provided these examples:

- I didn't know very many students because the classes were so big. I want them (my children) to get more attention and more individuality;
- I want my children to feel they are just as important as class officers, Homecoming Queens, basketball stars, etc. I feel more attention was given by teachers to athletes; and
- I think that more attention/emphasis should be directed toward the average/below average student. I always felt like the above average students didn't need the extra attention as much as the average/below average student.

Preparation for the real world is the third area in which academic program graduates expressed suggestions for change:

- Bring school closer to real life. Make it more real than books. Emphasize application to real life;
- Emphasize real life situations instead of book work. There is not enough interaction between students, instructors and real life; and
- Provide a learning basis which reaches beyond the limit of just the books - show 'real world' problems.

The Future:

The information presented thus far in this follow-up study has focused primarily on information gathered from the Indiola 1979 High School graduates concerning their past and present education, career, and life experiences.

To provide an even more complete picture of the graduates - a picture which moves us with them into the future - they were also asked to provide information about their career goals for 1995 and to describe the kind and level of job they intend to have approximately 10 years from now. The graduates were also asked to describe the additional education and training experiences they intend to obtain in order to realize these goals.

As can be seen on Table T, the highest percentages of *graduates from both the general and vocational program areas indicate that they will be doing different jobs in 1995 and will obtain additional training to do so* (29% of the vocational program graduates and 27% of the general program graduates).

Vocational and general program graduates provided the following examples describing this type of career goal. One person describes her goal as wanting to obtain a Master's degree and a Doctorate in order to do marriage and family therapy instead of being a Director of Patient resources. Another's goal involves becoming a graphic artist instead of a production worker at a factory; he intends to take courses in computer graphics in order to do this. Another individual is currently a pressman in a printing company and wishes to become a cameraman for a television studio. In order to obtain this goal he reports that he will go back to school for a B.S. in Mass Communication.

Other examples, to name only a few, of these intended career changes, include a claims processor who wants to become a flight attendant; a UPS billing clerk who wants to be an elementary school teacher, a housewife who wants to be a speech pathologist and yet another pressman who wants to be a police officer.

Vocational and general program graduates also share their second and third most frequently indicated career goals. Their second goal, identified by 19% of vocational and 20% of the general graduates can be categorized as "doing the same job at a higher level with training."

Examples of this type of career goal include the individual who is currently a cost accountant and wants to become the accounting controller. In order to do this, she is willing to obtain further college education and pass her CPA exam. A programmer who does data processing wants to become a senior programmer analyst and will receive technical training provided by his employer to do so. Another individual reports that he is now an International Air Export Manager and by 1995 intends to be a vice-president of the company. In order to achieve this goal, he intends to attend seminars on his own and various ones provided by the company. Finally, an individual who is currently working as a medical assistant wants to become administrative head of one of the laboratories in the hospital. To do this she will attend classes in business management and business administration.

The third most frequently stated goal both of vocational and general program graduates is that of "starting their own business and obtaining training to do so." Specific examples of vocational graduates who are pursuing this goal include the office manager who wants to start her own CPA firm. Prior to doing so, however, she will complete her bachelor's degree in business and begin her master's degree in business administration. Another example is a maintenance man who is currently studying plumbing on his own and intends to one day own a plumbing company. Finally, there is a retail sales clerk who reports that she wants to begin a cosmetology business and will obtain her beautician's license to do that.

Examples of general program graduates who are also pursuing this goal include the retail store department manager who wants to own her own retail company and intends to earn a B.A. in business prior to doing this. Another graduate wants to establish a company doing electronic repairs; he intends to attend a technical institute to prepare for this. And yet another individual

reports that he wants to own an auto paint and body work shop. He is currently doing this work for someone else and sees the need to attend classes at Ivy-Tech in order to prepare himself for starting his own business.

Graduates of academic program areas indicated the same three career goals in different order. The highest percent of their responses (44%) fall into the category of "doing the same job at a higher level with training.

Examples of this goal as described by these graduates include a computer programmer/operator who wants to work into upper management levels of a major data processing organization. By 1995 she intends to pursue a M.S. degree in computer science, participate in a software development training program, receive on-the-job-training, and perhaps even obtain an M.B.A. Another academic graduate reports that while she would like to continue as a real estate agent, in 1995 she would also like to be doing investment brokering and establishing herself as an entrepreneur. To back her up, she intends to take finance and accounting classes. Finally, an individual who is now a law clerk states her intention of one day practicing corporate law and continuing her education and training through seminars, classes and perhaps an additional degree.

Academic graduates as well as general and vocational program graduates report an entrepreneurial spirit.

Twenty-six percent of the academic graduates intend to pursue a different job with additional training. Within this goal category is included the woman who is currently doing temporary secretarial work and wishes to become a registered nurse. To do this, she intends to go to school for 4 years for her nursing degree. One man, who is currently painting cars, stated that by 1995 he will have realized his lifelong dream of becoming an animated cartoonist. In order to do this he plans to take art and photography classes. A final example to illustrate this category is the woman who is now a counselor at a spouse

abuse center; she is currently going to school and chipping away at a law degree 3 to 6 hours per semester. By 1995 as she puts it, "I shall be practicing law, at last!"

How the High School Class of 1979 Intends to Receive Further Training by 1995:

The types of training the follow-up study graduates intend to receive in order to obtain the goals they have identified can be found on Table M. The graduates of each program area indicated a different method as their first choice for obtaining additional training. Academic graduates most frequently stated intentions of earning an additional degree followed by completing a degree program and finally attending seminars/workshops in areas related to their career goals. In order of frequency, vocational graduates indicated that they would take additional classes, attend seminars and workshops, begin a degree program, and receive on-the-job training as ways of obtaining further training. The greatest number of responses to this question from general program graduates fall into the "not sure" or "no response category", followed by beginning a degree program and taking additional classes.

The content areas of these additional classes mentioned by both vocational and general program graduates include business management, mathematics, secretarial skills, computer skills, accounting, real estate classes, and tax and finance classes.

How Realistic are the Stated Goals of the Class of 1979?:

In order to more accurately assess for planning purposes what the next steps of the class of 1979 are actually going to look like, the goals which the follow-up study participants reported (Table T) were evaluated as realistic or unrealistic. Goals were judged unrealistic if they did not meet at least one of

the following criteria: 1) Currently doing work in the identified career/job area; 2) Gives evidence in work/education history of having set and met previous goals; or 3) Has obtained training and/or postsecondary education related to stated goal. The results of this evaluation can be found in Table R. As can be seen, the goals of over half of all three groups were judged to be realistic. Specifically, the goals of 62.8% of academic graduates, 56.2% of the vocational graduates, and 54.2% of the general graduates in this study were evaluated as realistic, while the general graduates are shown to have the lowest percentage of unrealistic goals of the three program area graduates, they also show the highest percentage of total responses in the "no response", "no goals" and "homemaker" categories (23.8%).

Summary of Findings:

A number of observations may be made and conclusions inferred from the information gathered in this follow-up study.

General program graduates had both the lowest average grade point average on record and lowest combined PSAT/SAT scores. Academic graduates ranked first in these areas followed by vocational program graduates.

Seven years after high school graduation, less than half of all study participants are currently married. General program graduates more than vocational or general graduates are more frequently married and have children, an indication that perhaps they are going directly into jobs after high school and are therefore much more likely to get married and begin families sooner than the academic or vocational students. Academic program graduates are least likely to be married and have children, perhaps indicating a tendency for graduates of the academic program to delay getting married and beginning families until they have completed a longer stretch of formal education and have become more established in their careers.

Of the three program areas, the high school graduates of general programs were least likely to be working in service related jobs and also reported the highest rate of unemployment (11%). Vocational graduates reported the lowest rate of unemployment (5.2%).

Over half or 53% of the 1979 academic program graduates report that they have completed their intended postsecondary degree/certificate while 13% of the vocational graduates and 16% of the general program graduates have done this. Nineteen percent of the vocational and 20% of the general program graduates intend to begin pursuing a postsecondary degree or certificate.

Thirty percent of these same academic program graduates also report earnings below $10,000 per year. Approximately 9.5% of the academic graduates, however, report that they are still engaged in the pursuit of full-time academic studies which may result in higher income levels later in their careers. Vocational and academic graduates who are earning at the higher income levels of between $20,000 to $34,999 are experiencing equivalent earnings at this point in their lives. Whether this parity between vocational and academic graduates will hold true as they mature in their careers is not possible to predict. One observation that may be made based on these data is that a higher percentage of vocational and academic program graduates are earning at higher income levels than general program graduates at this time in their lives.

Both the academic and vocational program graduates seemed satisfied with their high school education in terms of preparation for their next steps. Over 70% of the *vocational graduates* reported that their high school education had prepared them for both a *job and adulthood*, while over 70% of the *academic program graduates* reported that their high school education had prepared them *for college. General program graduates (69%), on the other hand, most frequently indicated that their high school education had prepared them for adulthood.*

Information gathered from follow-up study participants indicates that vocational and general students expect and got course work geared to practical situations, while academic students got less practically-oriented course work and that some academic students perhaps even expect their course work to be more abstract, theoretical and conceptual rather than practical and applied.

More importantly, however, *in all three program areas most of those individuals who reported that their high school course work did not relate to practical situations, also reported that they would have wanted it to do so.*

When asked to describe their greatest accomplishment since high school, graduates of all three program areas identified career related accomplishments among the top three areas of accomplishment. Further, general and vocational program graduates most frequently identified "family" accomplishments and general and academic program graduates most frequently identified educational accomplishments.

When asked to describe their greatest *difficulties* as an *adult*, however, graduates of all three program areas most frequently described the same top three areas of difficulty, e.g., *personal life skills, economic and career difficulties.* In other words, *graduates of all three program areas place a high value on career related accomplishments and regardless of their high school program area, all report sharing similar difficulties at this point in their lives.*

In terms of curriculum, vocational and general program graduates wish they had enrolled in more math, practical arts and job preparation courses. In retrospect, along with more math and practical arts courses, academic graduates also wish they had had more science courses in high school.

In terms of outside the classroom experiences during high school, both vocational and academic graduates seem to follow a "grass is greener on the other side of the fence" pattern. *Academic graduates indicate that they would*

have liked to work more during high school, while vocational students indicate they would have liked to work less. This shift in perception on the part of academic graduates (about working especially) could indicate a need (perceived only in retrospect) for more real world experiences during high school.

The responses of the vocational graduates, on the other hand seem to be indicating a desire to have worked less thereby providing time to have been more involved in school-related activities

When asked how they want high school to be different for their children, graduates of *all three program areas indicated that they would want their children to have more effective relationships with their high school teachers* along with *more preparation for the real world.*

In terms of their career goals for 1995, academic graduates (44%) most frequently describe goals that fit into the category of "doing the same job at a higher level with training," while only 19% of vocational graduates and 20% of general program graduates describe this goal category. This could indicate that academic graduates already see themselves as established in various organizations and careers and have even attained a level of satisfaction within these organizations and careers. This information may also be an indication that academic students have already set and met some long-range career goals and thus are committed to pursuing their career of choice for at least the next ten years. With almost equal frequency, general and vocational graduates most often report that they will be doing a different job with training - perhaps an indication that many of these graduates are aspiring to higher career levels or possibly that they are realizing that their jobs as they are doing them now will be different in 1995. In terms of how they will obtain further training by 1995, academic graduates more clearly follow paths of formal postsecondary training. A total of eighty-five percent of academic graduates state they will

either begin a degree, complete a degree, or obtain an additional degree compared to a total of 30% of the vocational graduates and 34% of the general program graduates who said they will obtain further training this way. Taking additional classes on the other hand appears to be the preferred method of the vocational and academic graduate for obtaining additional training.

Six percent more general than vocational students indicate that they are not sure what they will be doing in 1995 and twice as many general graduates as vocational graduates or 26% indicate that they are not sure how they intend to receive additional training by 1995. Further, 13.6% of the general graduates compared to 7.3% of the vocational graduates were recorded as stating they have no goals. These three pieces of information seem to indicate that the general graduate overall may be lacking in a sense of direction and purpose more than his/her academic and vocational program counterpart.

<u>The Findings Indicate</u>:

- † vocational program graduates have lower unemployment rates than either academic or general program graduates;
- † the need to serve the general program student more effectively in high school;
- † approaches for vocational education reform should be in the nature of *refining the system* rather than restructuring or abandoning the system;
- † approaches for academic education reform should be in the nature of *refining the system* rather than restructuring or abandoning the system;
- † the importance of providing the general high school student the opportunity to gain experience in setting and attaining goals so that this becomes a personal life skill and lifelong habit;
- † the need for expanded career exploration, job preparation, vocational guidance, and related experiences through which all students, especially general students, realize the importance of their high school education;
- † procedural and organizational modifications should be identified and developed to support more effective and productive student/teacher relationships.

TABLES A - R

TABLE A

POSITIVE RESPONSES* BY SITE AND PROGRAM AREA

	VOCATIONAL		ACADEMIC		GENERAL		TOTAL	TOTAL	% of sample Responding by School	% of all Responses by School
	# in Sample	# Positive Responses	# in Sample	# Positive Responses	# in Sample	# Positive Responses	# in Sample	# Positive* Responses		
SUBURBAN:	38	30	56	37 (4 Declined) 41	87	51 (5 Declined 1 Deceased) 57	181	118 (9 Declined 1 Deceased) 128	70	38.5%
RURAL:	30	25	16	14	33	27	79	66	83	19.9%
SMALL CITY:	37	29	34	31	28	19	99	79	79	23.8%
URBAN:	20	12	28	23	59	21 (2 Declined 1 Deceased) 24	107	56 (2 Declined 1 Deceased) 59	55	17.8% 100%
TOTAL	125	96	134	109	207	127	466	332**		
Level of positive response by program area	77%		81%		61%		71%			
% of Response by program area for entire sample	28.9%		32.8%		38.3%	=	100%			

* A positive response was counted in each of the following cases:

1) An individual in the sample responded to the questionnaire in writing or through a telephone interview;
2) An individual in the sample actively declined to participate in the study, or;
3) Researchers discovered or were told that the selected individual was deceased.

** Resulting in 319 actual returned questionnaires or conducted interviews

TABLE B

$\overline{X}$ GPA AND $\overline{X}$ SAT/PSAT SCORES OF THOSE CONSIDERED A POSITIVE RESPONSE

	VOCATIONAL N=96	ACADEMIC N=109	GENERAL N=126	OVERALL N=331 (GPA)* N=184 (SAT/PSAT)
$\overline{X}$ GPA of record	2.63	3.09	2.31	2.66
PSAT/SAT				
$\overline{X}$ Verbal Score	343	418	342	392
$\overline{X}$ Math Score	402	461	366	422
TOTAL	745	869	708	814
% of positive responses that took PSAT or SAT	45%	95%	30%	55.6%

* One transcript of the 332 positive responses could not be located.

TABLE C

HOW MANY GRADUATES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1979 REGULARLY WORKED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR?

	VOC. N=96			ACAD. N=105			GEN. N=118			TOTAL N=319		
	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Did you regularly work during the school year?	69.0	27.0	4.0	46.7	47.6	5.7	62.7	29.7	7.6	59.2	34.8	6.0
If you had it to do over again, would you work?	61.0	27.0	12.0	54.3	36.2	9.5	60.2	25.4	14.4	58.6	29.5	11.9

42

43

TABLE D

HOW MANY GRADUATES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1979 WERE INVOLVED IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES?

	VOCATIONAL N=96			ACADEMIC N=105			GENERAL N=118			TOTAL N=319		
	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A. Did you participate in school related activities?	48	48	4	84	10	6	53	40	7	62	33	5

	VOCATIONAL N=46			ACADEMIC N=11			GENERAL N=47			TOTAL N=112		
	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
B. If no, do you wish you had?	61	35	4	64	36	-	66	32	2	63	35	2

TABLE E

CURRENT MARITAL STATUS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES OF 1979

	VOCATIONAL N=96			ACADEMIC N=105			GENERAL N=118			TOTAL N=319		
	F %	M %	Both %	F %	M %	Both %	F %	M %	Both %	F %	M %	Both %
Single	31.4	46.7	38.5	45.8	45.7	45.7	36.8	39.3	38.1	38	43.4	40.8
Married	53.0	40.0	46.9	44.1	43.5	43.8	52.6	52.5	52.5	49.7	46.1	48.0
Divorced	9.8	8.9	9.4	6.8	2.2	4.8	5.3	3.3	4.2	7.2	4.6	6.0
Separated	2.0	-	1.0	-	-	-	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.2	.6	1.0
NR	3.9	4.4	4.2	1.7	8.7	4.8	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.9	5.3	4.1
Other				1.7	-	1.0					.6	

% OF 1979 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BY PROGRAM WHO HAVE CHILDREN

VOCATIONAL N=96	ACADEMIC N=105	GENERAL N=118	TOTAL N=319
N=52 54% with children	N=34 32% with children	N=86 73% with children	N=172 53.9% with children

TABLE F

WHERE THE GRADUATES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1979 ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED

	VOCATIONAL N=96		ACADEMIC N=105		GENERAL N=118		TOTAL N=319	
	N=	%	N=	%	N=	%	N=	%
Service	55	57.3	54	61.0	46	39.0	165	51.7
Manufacturing	14	14.6	7	6.7	27	22.9	48	15.0
Retail	13	13.5	8	7.6	16	13.6	37	11.5
Unemployed	5	5.2	8	7.6	13	11.0	26	8.2
Armed Services	1	1.0	5	4.8	4	3.4	10	3.1
Homemaker	4	4.2	1	1.0	5	4.2	10	3.1
Self-employed	3	3.1	1	1.0	5	4.2	9	2.8
Other	1	1.0	10	9.5	2	1.7	13	4.1
No Response	0	-	1	1.0	0	-	1	.03

TABLE G

PARTICIPANT INCOME RANGES BY PROGRAM AREA

	VOCATIONAL N=96 %	ACADEMIC N=105 %	GENERAL N=118 %	TOTAL N=319 %
Under $10,000	21	30	19	23
$10,000 - 14,999	24	20	27	24
$15,000 - 19,999	24	22	27	24
$20,000 - 24,999	13	13	8	11
$25,000 - 34,999	9	12	8	10
Over $35,000	2	1	2	2
No Response	7	2	9	6

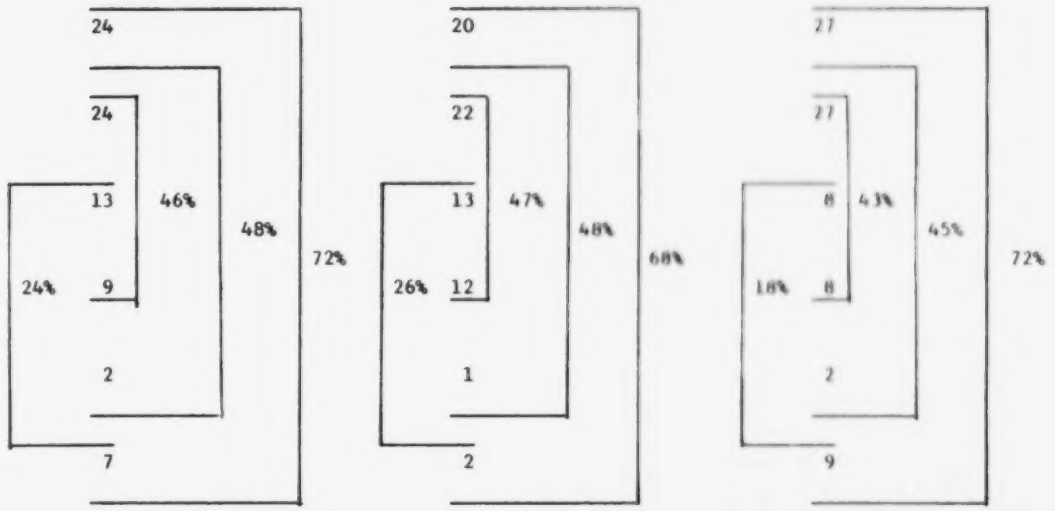


TABLE H

WHAT THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES OF 1979 HAVE DONE, ARE DOING OR PLAN TO DO ABOUT THE CONTINUATION OF THEIR FORMAL EDUCATION

	VOC. N=96 Percent	ACAD. N=105 Percent	GEN. N=118 Percent
Completed intended degree or certificate	13	53	16
Currently pursuing intended degree or certificate	10	16	9
Incomplete degree or certificate - no stated plans to complete	7	7	5
Incomplete degree or certificate - stated plans to complete	10	12	10
At this time have not pursued further degree or certificate	38	5	34
Intend to begin degree or certificate	19	3	20
No response or cannot determine from information	3	3	6

TABLE I

HOW GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF 1979 VIEW THEIR HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION IN TERMS OF PREPARATION FOR:

	VOC. N=96			ACAD. N=105			GEN. N=118			OVERALL N=319		
	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Yes %	No %	No Response %
A job?	82	18	-	51	44	5	58	42	-	63	35	2
College?	44	41	16	71	25	4	43	40	17	53	35	12
Adulthood?	72	28	-	65	30	5	69	28	3	69	29	2

TABLE J

DID THE METHODS USED IN HIGH SCHOOL RELATE COURSE WORK TO PRACTICAL SITUATIONS?

	VOCATIONAL N=96			ACADEMIC N=105			GENERAL N=118		
	Yes %	No %	NR %	Yes %	No %	NR %	Yes %	No %	NR %
A. Did the methods used in high school relate course work to practical situations?	59.4	34.4	6.2	55.2	38.1	6.7	58.5	32.2	9.3

	VOCATIONAL N=33			ACADEMIC N=40			GENERAL N=38		
	Yes %	No %	NR %	Yes %	No %	NR %	Yes %	No %	NR %
B. If no, would you have wanted it to do so?	94.0	3.0	3.0	85.0	12.5	2.5	87.0	8.0	5.0

TABLE K

RESPONSES BY SUBGROUP TO THE QUESTION:
"WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT SINCE LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL?"

Three most frequently cited accomplishments by subgroup and overall (male and female together)

VOCATIONAL	ACADEMIC	GENERAL	OVERALL
Career	Educational	Career	Career
Family	Career	Family	Educational
Economics	Personal Life Skills	Educational	Family

	VOCATIONAL N=96			ACADEMIC N=105			GENERAL N=118			OVERALL N=319		
	% M=45	% F=51	% Both	% M=50	% F=55	% Both	% M=53	% F=65	% Both	% M=148	% F=171	% Both
Economic	29	14	21	4	7	6	19	18	19	17	13	15
Educational	18	20	19	46	62	54	28	21	25	31	34	33
Career	62	61	61	38	25	34	51	26	37	50	36	43
Family	13	29	22	10	22	16	25	28	26	16	26	22
Personal Life Skills	9	18	14	26	18	22	19	12	15	18	16	17
None	0	4	2	2	2	2	0	6	3	1	4	3
No response	0	0	*-*	0	4	2	4	3	3	1	2	2

(* A maximum of three accomplishments per participant was recorded, therefore, percentage totals in each column may equal more than 100%)

TABLE L

RESPONSES BY SUBGROUP AND OVERALL TO THE QUESTION:
"WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST DIFFICULTY AS AN ADULT?"*

Three most frequently cited difficulties by subgroup and overall (male and female together):

VOCATIONAL	ACADEMIC	GENERAL	OVERALL
Economic	Personal Life Skills	Personal Life Skills	Personal Life Skills
Personal Life Skills	Economic	Economic	Economic
Career	Career	Career	Career
Family equal for 3rd			
None place			

	VOCATIONAL N=96			ACADEMIC N=105			GENERAL N=118			OVERALL N=319		
	% M=45	% F=51	% Both	% M=50	% F=55	% Both	% M=53	% F=65	% Both	% M=148	% F=171	% Both
Economic	34	26	29	20	24	25	23	25	24	25	25	25
Educational	2	10	6	8	7	8	11	3	7	7	6	7
Career	20	20	20	16	31	24	25	17	20	20	22	21
Family	13	25	20	4	7	6	13	16	15	10	16	13
Personal Life Skills	25	28	26	38	53	46	26	23	25	30	34	32
None	16	4	20	8	4	6	11	5	8	12	4	8
No Response	7	4	5	6	7	7	8	8	8	7	6	7

(* A maximum of three accomplishments per respondent was recorded, therefore, percentage totals in each column may equal more than 100%)

TABLE M

HOW THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1979 INTENDS TO RECEIVE FURTHER TRAINING BY 1995:*

Three most frequently indicated methods of obtaining further training by program area and overall:

Vocational	Academic	General	Overall
1. Take additional classes	1. Obtain additional degree	1. Not sure/no response	1. Take additional classes
2. Seminars/workshops	2. Complete a degree program	2. Begin a degree program	2. Obtain additional degree
3. On-the-job training	3. Seminars/workshops	3. Take additional classes	3. Seminars/workshops
3. Begin a degree program			3. Not sure/no response

	VOCATIONAL N=96		ACADEMIC N=105		GENERAL N=118		TOTAL N=319	
	N=	%	N=	%	N=	%	N=	%
Take additional classes	(29)	30	(10)	10	(23)	20	(62)	19
Obtain additional degree	(4)	4	(46)	44	(7)	6	(57)	18
Seminars/workshops	(16)	17	(23)	22	(14)	12	(53)	17
Begin a degree program	(15)	16	(8)	8	(24)	20	(47)	15
Complete a degree program	(10)	10	(24)	23	(9)	8	(43)	13
On-the-job training	(15)	16	(13)	12	(11)	9	(39)	12
No further training identified	(8)	8	(-)	-	(8)	7	(16)	5
Other	(6)	6	(5)	5	(4)	3	(15)	5
Not sure/no response	(13)	13	(11)	11	(30)	26	(54)	17

(* A maximum of three choices per participant was recorded, therefore, percentage totals in each column may equal more than 100%)

TABLE N

THE FOLLOWING ARE MOST FREQUENTLY CITED BY SURVEY
RESPONDENTS AS THOSE AREAS IN WHICH
THEY WOULD ENROLL IN MORE, FEWER, AND THE SAME NUMBER OF COURSES
"if they had it do do over again":

Respondents from the three program areas cited MORE courses in: (Top 3)

VOCATIONAL N=96		ACADEMIC N=105		GENERAL N=118	
%		%		%	
69	Math	60	Math	67	Job Preparation
58	Job Preparation	53	Practical Arts	63	Practical Arts
56	Practical Arts	52	Science	61	Math

Respondents from the three program areas cited FEWER courses in: (Top 3)

VOCATIONAL N=96		ACADEMIC N=105		GENERAL N=118	
%		%		%	
19	Fine Arts	17	Fine Arts	17	Foreign Language
17	Foreign Language	14	Social Studies	16	Fine Arts
17	Social Studies	14	Foreign Language	12	Social Studies

Respondents from the three program areas cited SAME number of courses in: (Top 3)

VOCATIONAL N=96		ACADEMIC N=105		GENERAL N=118	
%		%		%	
54	English	65	Social Studies	59	Social Studies
53	Social Studies	56	Fine Arts	45	Fine Arts
50	Fine Arts	54	Vocational Ed.	40	English

Overall respondents from the three program areas cited MORE, FEWER or the SAME courses in: (Top 3)

MORE		FEWER		SAME	
%		%		%	
63	Math	17	Fine Arts	5	Social Studies
58	Job Preparation	16	Foreign Language	50	Fine Arts
58	Practical Arts	14	Social Studies	48	English

TABLE O

HOW MANY GRADUATES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1979 ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES?

	VOCATIONAL N=96 %	ACADEMIC N=105 %	GENERAL N=118 %	TOTAL N=319 N	%
Participation in:					
Service Clubs	8	21	10	40	13
Volunteer Work	18	31	16	69	22
Other Community Activities	29	51	31	118	37

TABLE P

ONE WAY THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES OF 1979 WANT SCHOOL TO BE DIFFERENT FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Three most frequently cited changes by program area and overall:

Vocational	Academic	General	Overall
1. More effective student/teacher relationships.	1. Changes in curriculum.	1. More preparation for the real world.	1. More effective student/ teacher relationships.
2. More preparation for the real world.	2. Better college preparation.	1. More emphasis on the importance of education.	2. Changes in the curriculum.
3. More career education and preparation.	3. More preparation for the real world.	1. More effective student/teacher relationships.	3. More preparation for the real world.
	3. More effective student/teacher relationships.		

	VOCATIONAL N=97	%	ACADEMIC N=105	%	GENERAL N=118	%	TOTAL N=319	%
More effective student/teacher relationships.	20	20.8	10	9.5	15	12.7	45	14.1
Changes in curriculum.	8	8.3	18	17.1	13	11.0	39	12.2
More preparation for the real world.	10	10.4	10	9.5	15	12.7	35	11.0
More emphasis on the importance of education.	7	7.3	9	8.6	15	12.7	31	9.7
Participate more and get more out of school.	8	8.3	8	7.6	13	11.0	29	9.1
No changes.	6	6.3	9	8.6	12	10.2	27	8.5
More career education and preparation.	9	9.4	8	7.6	8	6.8	25	7.8
Better college preparation.	8	8.3	13	12.4	4	3.4	25	7.8
More emphasis on the basics.	8	8.3	7	6.7	9	7.6	24	7.5
Better student/student relationship.	2	2.1	2	1.9	6	5.1	10	3.1
Better counseling.	4	4.2	3	2.8	-	-	7	2.2
More relaxed learning environment.	2	2.1	4	3.8	-	-	6	1.9
Less drugs, alcohol, and violence.	-	-	1	1.0	5	4.2	6	1.9
No response.	4	4.2	3	2.8	3	2.5	10	3.1

TABLE Q

WHAT THE CLASS OF 1979 INTENDS TO BE DOING CAREERWISE IN 1995:

The three most frequently cited career goals by program area are:

VOCATIONAL	ACADEMIC	GENERAL
1. Doing different job with training.	1. Doing same job at higher level with training.	1. Doing different job with training.
2. Doing same job at higher level with training.	2. Doing different job with training.	2. Doing same job at higher level with training.
3. Start own business with training.	3. Start own business with training.	3. Start own business with training.

	VOC. N=96 %	ACAD. N=105 %	GEN. N=118 %	OVERALL N=319 %
Doing same job.	9	0	5	5
Doing same job with additional training.	11	2	5	6
Doing same job at higher level.	3	1	5	3
Doing same job at higher level with training.	19	44	20	27
Doing different job.	1	1	5	2
Doing different job with training.	29	26	27	27
Start own business.	2	1	2	2
Start own business with training.	14	14	10	13
Other e.g., retired, homemaker, part-time work.	3	2	7	4
Not sure and no response.	8	9	14	11

TABLE R

HOW "REALISTIC" ARE THE GOALS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1979?

	VOCATIONAL N=96				ACADEMIC N=105			
	N=	M%	F%	Both%	N=	M%	F%	Both%
Realistic	(54)	62.2	51	56.2	(66)	73.9	54.2	62.8
Unrealistic	(29)	28.9	31.4	30.2	(25)	17.4	28.8	23.8
No response	(4)	4.4	3.9	4.2	(7)	8.7	5.1	6.7
No goals	(7)	15.5	9.8	7.3	(6)	-	10.2	5.7
Homemaker	(2)	-	3.9	2.1	(1)	-	1.7	1.0

	GENERAL N=118				TOTAL N=319			
	N=	M%	F%	Both%	N=	M%	F%	Both%
Realistic	(64)	56.5	51.8	54.2	184	63.4	52.4	57.7
Unrealistic	(26)	25.8	17.9	22.0	80	24.2	25.9	25.1
No response	(6)	6.5	3.6	5.1	17	6.5	4.1	5.3
No goals	(16)	11.3	16.1	13.6	29	5.9	12.1	9.1
Homemaker	(6)	-	10.7	5.1	9	-	5.4	2.8

APPENDICES I and II

Appendix I

Procedures

Advisory Committee:

Because of the nature of this project, an Advisory Committee was utilized to provide advice and counsel throughout the project. The Advisory Committee consisted of the following eleven persons:

- o IAAVD Officer acting as Project Director (1)
- o SBVTE Monitor (1)
- o Subcontractor's Project Coordinator (1)
- o Two representatives from each of the four participating school corporations (8)

The functions of the Advisory Committee included providing assistance in defining what specific information should be sought from the graduates, development of the survey instrument and procedures, as well as providing suggestions for reporting the findings. Other important functions of the project's Advisory Committee included assistance in contacting difficult to locate graduates.

Step I: Site Selection

The project monitoring committee identified four school corporations willing to participate in and contribute to the study. These high schools were to fit the criteria of serving primarily a rural, an urban, a suburban, or a small city clientele and being located in either the northern, central, or southern thirds of the state.

Firm commitments for participation were obtained from four appropriate school corporations.

Step II: Selection of Study Sample

The subcontractor's staff in collaboration with a representative of each school corporation drew the 25% stratified random sample from each of the four high schools' class of 1979 as follows:

1. At the comprehensive high school providing the sample, divide class of 1979 into groups:
   a. Vocational graduates
   b. Special Education graduates*
   c. General Curriculum graduates
   d. College preparatory graduates
2. Put each group into alphabetical order.
3. Start with second name and identify every fourth name for sample.

* Graduates of this program area and their needs have not been included in this follow-up study because of low incidence of identification in 1979.

Step III: Data Gathering

As seen in Table A, each subsample was made up of 79-181 graduates and the total sample was composed of 466 graduates. This approach permits the pooling of those data into a single composite graduating class (Indiola High School) that permits the generalization of the findings to a statewide basis.

A) Questionnaire:

The questionnaire used in this study was developed by the Advisory Committee and includes questions both designed to assess students' experiences as well as to gather information for planning secondary or postsecondary programs, offerings and services.

B) Dossiers:

A dossier for each of the 1979 graduates in the sample was prepared by site contact persons and included the following information:

... rank in class;
... grade point average;
... SAT, PSAT, ACT, and other standardized test scores;
... high school program (i.e., vocational, college preparatory, general, special education);
... postsecondary plans while a high school senior;
... name and telephone number of emergency contact person provided on graduate's record at time of graduation; and
... address and telephone number of graduate at time of graduation.

As can be seen, although this information was prepared for each individual graduate, it is reported only as group data.

C) Contact Procedures:

Initial contact with the selected graduates was attempted via the mail and was conducted on a site by site basis. This first mailing contained a synopsis of the study, a post card, and a letter addressed to each graduate stressing the importance of each graduate's response. These initial letters were signed by a designated school staff member who had been at the high school in 1979 and likely to be remember ed by the graduate. E.g., a counselor and a vice principal. Each graduate was asked to return the post card and indicate whether he/she wanted to complete a pencil and paper questionnaire, to be interviewed over the telephone or not to participate in the study at all. To exercise the telephone interview option, the graduate was asked to also indicate their telephone number and preferred time for being called. This first mailing was sent either to the participant's address at time of graduation or to the most recent address on file at the school for that individual.

Within approximately 3 weeks of the first mailing, questionnaires had been sent out to all who had returned post cards. Each individual in the sample (whether they had returned a post card or not) also received a questionnaire with the exception of those individuals whose post card had been returned as "non-deliverable."

Within 2-3 weeks of this mailing, follow-up telephone calls were made to those individuals who had returned their post cards indicating a willingness to participate and who had not yet returned their questionnaire within 2-3 weeks of its mailing.

In many of these phone calls the graduates stated that they had lost the questionnaire. In this case, a second questionnaire was sent to them.

After completing contact with those graduates who had indicated a willingness to participate, the same tools/methods were used to track down the telephone numbers and make contact with those who had not returned their post card.

In cases where those returning the post card had not indicated a phone number, the following methods and tools were used to locate phone numbers for these individuals:

1) Local phone books were used to find phone numbers of the graduate's parents, the graduate, or the individual identified as the emergency contact person while the graduate was in high school.

2) Local Cross Street directories were used to locate telephone numbers of those who may have been neighbors of the graduates. These numbers were called and the residents asked to provide information on the whereabouts of the graduate or the graduate's parents.

3) School personnel were asked to provide any information they might have about the whereabouts of graduate, parent's of the graduate, friends of the graduate.

An index card system was also utilized for two of the sites.* Early in the project, an index card was kept on each selected individual. On this card was recorded the number of contacts, numbers of questionnaires sent out as well as any other information useful for ultimately making contact with the individual and keeping track of the level of effort required to obtain a response from that individual.

Level of Effort and Results:

Overall effort at two of the four sites (urban and suburban) resulted in a 64.9% response. The following levels of effort with these two sites resulted in the following response rate:

- The initial mailing resulted in a total of 21.6% returned post cards indicating a willingness to participate; 2.5% requested a telephone interview;

*The major portion of the data gathering was handled by the subcontractor for 2 of the four sites. It is for these two sites that the card system was used and upon which the statistics for data gathering are based.

- o A total of 20.8% of the selected graduates at these two sites returned their questionnaires with no follow-up phone calls. This percentage also includes those individuals who had returned their post cards;

- o 6.6% more individuals returned their questionnaires as the result of one follow-up phone call;

- o 5.5% returned their first questionnaire after 3 to 4 follow-up phone calls;

- o A total of 20.8% of the individuals at these two sites responded after receiving a second questionnaire. Of this 20.8% who responded after receiving a second questionnaire, 11.8% also received between 0 and 2 phone calls;

- o 5.9% of this group received 3 or 4 phone calls;

- o The response rate after receiving two questionnaires and 5, 6 or 7 follow-up phone calls was an additional 3.1%;

- o A third questionnaire was mailed to and returned from 4.9% of the individuals at these two sites.

Of the total responses received from all four sites, 39% was the result of telephone interviews. It is important also to note that most of the telephone interviews occurred between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. as most graduates were working and could not be contacted during daytime working hours.

Step IV: Interpretation Of Gathered Data

A. Demographics of follow-up study participants:

1) Program Area:

Among the three program areas sampled, the highest rate of return came from selected graduates of the academic program area with an 81% return rate. Those selected from the general program area participated the least with a 61% return rate and selected vocational education program graduates participated at a rate of 77%.

2) $\bar{X}$ GPA:

An average grade point average (GPA) was calculated on those providing a positive response in order to identify a point of comparison between those who participated in the study and the total graduating class of 1979 from all 4 schools. This average GPA was calculated by program area and overall by using each individual's grade point average of record which was defined as the final grade point average listed on each individual's transcript. As can be seen on Table C, the overall X GPA of the participants was 2.66. The X GPA of those classified as academic students was the highest at 3.09 followed by the X GPA of those classified as vocational students (X GPA = 2.63) and general program students (X GPA = 2.31)

3) PSAT/SAT Scores:

Again, to establish another point of comparison between those participating in the study and the total group from which the sample was drawn, X PSAT/SAT scores by program area and overall were calculated on the study participants (positive response). These average PSAT/SAT scores were calculated as follows:

1) If an individual had taken both the PSAT/SAT, the scores from the SAT were used;

2) If an individual had taken only one or the other test, that score was used.

3) If an individual had taken the test more than one time, the highest test score was used to determine the average scores. (The highest score was determined by adding together the individual's verbal and math scores and using the highest combined score.)

B. Specifics on analysis of the information:

Questions 7 through 11 were open-ended questions and as such elicited descriptive responses. In order to analyze this information, broad categories were derived from the descriptive information. Participant responses were coded and tallied according to these categories and percentages calculated.

In questions 7,8, and 11, (TABLES K, L, M) participants frequently provided information which addressed more than one of the available categories. Therefore, up to three responses per questionnaire were tallied for these questions.

In questions 9 and 10 (TABLES P, Q) however, only one response per participant was usually provided and therefore only one response per participant was recorded for these questions.

To develop the information presented in Table H, the seven categories were identified after the data was gathered. While specific questions were not asked on the questionnaire about what the graduate has done or plans to do about his/her continuation of formal education, this information was available indirectly (for the most part) from other sections of the questionnaire and particularly from question 11 and 12b (What if any kinds of additional education and training experiences do you plan to have had by 1995? and work/education history from June 1979 to the present?).

Where the information was not available on the questionnaire, it was recorded as such in the category of "no response" or "cannot determine from the information".

In question number 10 each graduate was asked to indicate the kind and level of job he/she plans to have by 1995. The responses to this question can be found on TABLE Q.

As can be seen in TABLE R these career goals were evaluated realistic or unrealistic on the basis of the criteria described in the report. If a graduate's response to question number 10 met at least one of these criteria it was evaluated as realistic, if not, it was judged unrealistic.

Appendix II

GRADUATING CLASS OF 1979
FOLLOW-UP STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____

Directions: Please place a check (√) before the *most* appropriate response for each of the questions in items 1-6.

---

1. Did your high school program prepare you for:

▲ a job? □ yes □ no ▲ college? □ yes □ no ▲ adulthood? □ yes □ no

2. If you had it to do over, would you enroll in more(M), fewer(F), or the same(S) number of courses in:

M	F	S		M	F	S	
□	□	□	Fine Arts (art, music, etc.)?	□	□	□	Social Studies?
□	□	□	Practical Arts (Home Economics, Business, Industrial Arts)?	□	□	□	Foreign Language?
				□	□	□	Mathematics?
□	□	□	Vocational Education?	□	□	□	Science?
□	□	□	English?	□	□	□	Job Preparation?

3. Did the methods used in high school relate course work to practical situations? □ yes □ no
If no, would you have wanted it to do so? □ yes □ no

4. Did you participate in school-related activities (i.e. clubs, athletics, student government, etc.)? □ yes □ no
If no, do you wish you had? □ yes □ no

5. During high school did you regularly work during the school year? □ yes □ no
If you had it to do over again, would you? □ yes □ no

6. Are you involved in community activities?

Service clubs □ yes □ no
Volunteer work □ yes □ no
Other activities □ yes □ no

Directions: Questions 7-11 do *not* require that your answers be complete sentences. It is important only that we be able to understand the meaning and intent of your response.

---

7. Since leaving high school, what do you consider your *greatest accomplishment*?

8. What has been your *greatest difficulty* as an adult?

9. What is *one way* you want high school to be different for your children than it was for you?

10. What *kind and level* of job do you plan to have by 1995?

11. What, if any, kinds of additional *education and training* experiences do you plan to have had by 1995? (For our purposes, education means workshops, on-the-job training, seminars, etc. as well as formal training or education.)

12a. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

Employer _____

Calendar year 1985 Income form employment:

- ☐ under $10,000
- ☐ $10,000 - $14,999
- ☐ $15,000 - $19,999
- ☐ $20,000 - $24,999
- ☐ $25,000 - $35,000
- ☐ over $35,000

Marital Status

☐ single ☐ married ☐ divorced ☐ separated

Number of children _____

12b. WORK/EDUCATION HISTORY

Question 12b requests you to prepare a personal work/education history since high school graduation. For any period where there is no change from what you already reported, just enter NC.

Under work: please indicate the type of job as specifically as possible and full time (F) or part time (P) for every job you have held since high school graduation.

Under education and training: ... for seminars, workshops, on-the-job training, please indicate who provided it, duration (i.e. five hours, fifty hours, etc.) and topic. ... for formal education, please indicate program or major (i.e. English, electronics), institution (DePauw, IVTC, ITT-Tech, etc.), and full time (F) or part time (P). Also, if you completed the program, please indicate when and if completion resulted in a certificate or degree. If degree, AA, BS, MA, PhD, etc.?

Year	Type of work	P	F	Type or Place of Education & Training	P	F
July 1979 - June 1980						
July 1980 - June 1981						
July 1981 - June 1982						
July 1982 - June 1983						
July 1983 - June 1984						
July 1984 - June 1985						
July 1985 - PRESENT						

Thank you for your time and effort. Please be encouraged to share any additional thoughts you have on your high school experiences by noting them on the back of this page.

HIGHLIGHTS OF

THE CLASS OF 1979 SPEAKS OUT:

A CONSUMERS' REPORT ON HOOSIER HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Approximately seven years after graduation from high school, an impressive 71% of a representative sample of Hoosier high school graduates shared information about themselves and the quality of their high school education. In so doing, they provided descriptive information for educational planning and have provided educators a defensible base for either continuing, intensifying, or modifying current priorities and directions of change for secondary education.

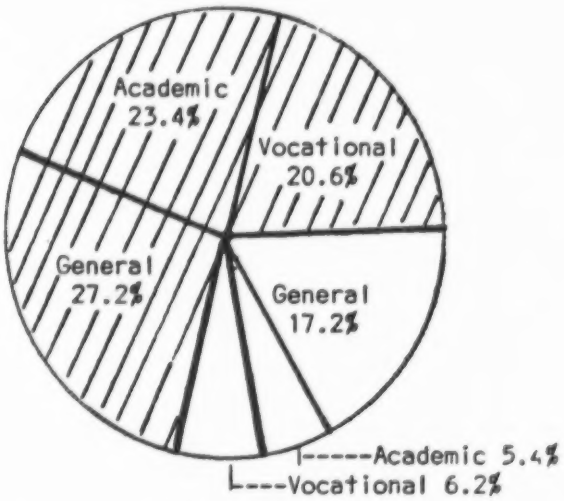
The Findings Indicate:

- † vocational program graduates have lower unemployment rates than either academic or general program graduates;
- † the need to serve the general program student more effectively in high school;
- † approaches for vocational education reform should be in the nature of *refining the system* rather than restructuring or abandoning the system;
- † approaches for academic education reform should be in the nature of *refining the system* rather than restructuring or abandoning the system;
- † the importance of providing the general high school student the opportunity to gain experience in setting and attaining goals so that this becomes a personal life skill and lifelong habit;
- † the need for expanded career exploration, job preparation, vocational guidance, and related experiences through which all students, especially general students, realize the importance of their high school education;
- † procedural and organizational modifications should be identified and developed to support more effective and productive student/teacher relationships.

Description of Sample:

Four hundred sixty-six 1979 graduates of four Hoosier high schools were selected for participation in the study. Seventy-one percent of the stratified random sample participated. (See chart) Of this sample, 61.8% of the graduates were from high schools in urban areas and 38.2% were from high schools located in rural or non-urban areas.

Study Sample by % of Participation and Program Area



-- follow-up study participants

-- non participants

What They Were Doing Then:

At the Time of Their Graduation From High School in 1979:

- ✓ the average grade point average on a four point scale for academic program graduates was 3.09, for vocational program graduates 2.63, and for general program graduates 2.31;
- ✓ 84% of academic program graduates, 53% of general program graduates and 48% of vocational program graduates had been involved in school activities;
- ✓ 69% of the vocational program graduates, 62.7% of the general program graduates and 46.7% of the academic program graduates regularly worked during the school year.

What the Graduates Are Doing Now:

Approximately Seven Years After Their Graduation From High School:

- § the unemployment rate was found to be the highest among the graduates of general high school programs (11%); the unemployment rate was found to be the lowest among high school vocational program graduates (5.2%) and was at 7.6% for academic graduates at a time when the state's unemployment rate was at 7.9%;
- § twenty-two percent of high school vocational and 25% academic program graduates are earning between $20,000 and 34,999 annually compared to 16% of the general program graduates;
- § graduates of the general programs are more likely to be married and have children than their vocational and academic program counterparts;

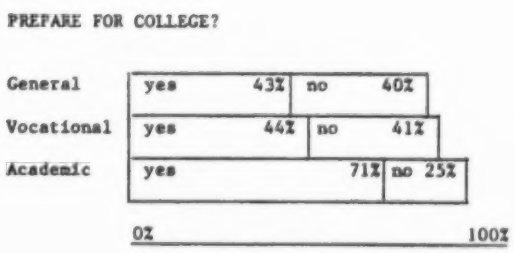
§ career-related accomplishments were cited most frequently among the top three greatest accomplishments since leaving high school by graduates of academic, vocational, and general programs;

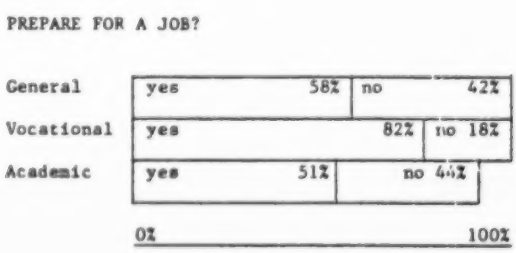
§ graduates of academic, vocational, and general programs most frequently described economic, career, and personal life skills as the areas of greatest difficulty they have faced as an adult;

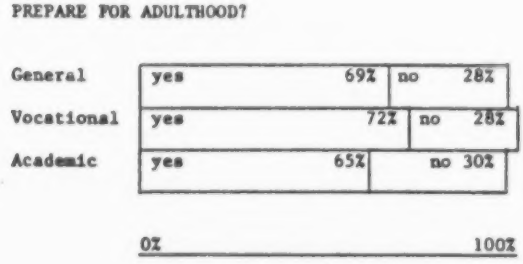
§ approximately two-thirds of all graduates who did not participate in school-related activities in high school wish they had done so.

What the Graduates Think About Their High School Education:

For What Did Your High School Education Prepare You?







✓ vocational program graduates most frequently indicated that their high school education prepared them for a job and for adulthood;

✓ academic program graduates most frequently indicated that their high school education prepared them for college;

✓ general program graduates most frequently indicated that their high school education prepared them for adulthood although fewer general program graduates than vocational graduates indicated this preparation;

✓ when asked to describe one way they would want school to be different for their children, "more effective teacher/student relationships" and "more preparation for the real world" were two of the three areas most frequently described by graduates of academic, vocational, and general programs;

- ✓ approximately one-third of the graduates indicated that the methods used in high school did *not* relate their course work to practical situations; almost ninety percent of these individuals would have wanted their course work to relate to practical situations;

- ✓ when asked what courses they would enroll in if they had it to do over again, graduates of all three program areas indicated they would enroll in *more* math and practical arts; graduates of general and vocational programs indicated they would also enroll in more job preparation classes; and

- ✓ if they had it to do over again, graduates of all three program areas would enroll in *fewer* fine arts, foreign language and social studies courses.

What the Graduates Say About Their Future:

- ◊ vocational and academic graduates have more clarity about their career goals and intentions for obtaining further training than do the graduates of general programs;

- ◊ vocational and general program graduates most frequently described "doing a different job with training" as their career goal for 1995 while academic program graduates most frequently described "doing the same job at a higher level with training" as their career goal for 1995;

- ◊ vocational program graduates indicate that they will obtain further training through such methods as taking additional classes, on-the-job-training, seminars, and workshops, while academic program graduates indicate that they will most likely obtain further training through formal academic methods;

- ◊ vocational graduates overall indicate they are more likely than general program graduates to obtain further training by 1995.

Procedures:

I. Advisory Committee - The Indiana Association of Area Vocational Districts (IAAVD) utilized an eleven person advisory committee to provide advice and counsel throughout the project. The advisory committee aided in defining what information should be gathered, how it should be presented, assisted in the initial contact of graduates and the location of hard to find graduates.

II. Data Gathering - Sixty-one percent of the follow-up participants provided information via a written questionnaire and 39% via telephone interview.

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